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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/553,107	04/20/00	ELLIS	E GJH-0018

IM22/0717
EXXONMOBIL RESEARCH & ENGINEERING COMPAN
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EXAMINER	
JOHNSON, J	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

1764

DATE MAILED: 07/17/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trad marks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/553,107

Applicant(s)

Ellis et al.

Examiner

Jerry D. Johnson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ 6) ☐ Other:

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The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Harrison et al.

Harrison et al, U.S. Patent 5,292,428, teach a process wherein hydrocarbon feedstock is passed through two or more hydrodesulfurization zones and connected in a series each containing a packed bed of solid catalyst. The liquid is passed from the first zone to the next until the final zone. Make up hydrogen is supplied to a hydrodesulfurization zone (i) other than the first hydrodesulfurization zone; hydrogen-containing gas is recovered from each hydrodesulfurization zone. The first hydrodesulfurization zone is supplied with hydrogen-containing gas recovered from a subsequent hydrodesulfurization zone (abstract). If the feedstock is, for example a diesel feedstock then the reaction conditions used in the process will typically be chosen to reduce the residual sulphur content to about 0.5 wt % S or less, e.g. about 0.3 wt % S or less, even down to about 0.05 wt % S or less and to reduce the aromatics content to about 27 volume % or lower, e.g. to about 20 volume % or less (column 9, lines 35-41). There will be used an amount of hydrogen which is equivalent to at least the stoichiometric

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amount of hydrogen required to desulphurise the feedstock and to achieve the desired degree of dearomatisation. Normally it will be preferred to use at least about 1.05 times such stoichiometric amount of hydrogen (column 10, lines 3-9). The process can be carried out in a plant having two hydrodesulphurisation zones or in one having more than two such zones, for example 3, 4, 5, or more (column 10, lines 22-25). Different hydrodesulphurisation conditions may be used in different zones (column 10, lines 26-65). In column 18 of Harrison et al, Tables 1-3, heavy gas vacuum oil feedstock having 2.23 weight % sulphur content is converted to a product having 31 ppm S and 15.9 vol % aromatics. Accordingly, Harrison et al teach a process and composition which reasonable appears to be either the same as or an obvious variation of the instantly claimed product and composition. Applicants' claims if not anticipated by 35 U.S.C. § 102, would be obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 13-15 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-35 of copending Application No. 09/553,108. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the distillate fuels of the 09/553,108 claims are

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encompassed by the instant claims. Accordingly, the claimed compositions share many of the same properties and would be obvious in view of each other.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 13-15 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-37 of copending Application No. 09/553,373. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the distillate fuels of the 09/553,373 claims are encompassed by the instant claims. Accordingly, the claimed compositions share many of the same properties and would be obvious in view of each other.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 5, 16, are 17 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 5 lacks antecedent basis to depend from claim 2.

Claim 16 lacks antecedent basis, i.e., the process of claim 1 requires the hydrogen-containing product gas stream to be "cascaded" to the first stage reaction.

Claim 17 fails to further limit claim 1, i.e., the process of claim 1 requires the hydrogen-containing product gas stream to be "cascaded" to the first stage reaction. Accordingly, claim 1

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requires "at least a portion" of the hydrogen-containing product gas stream is conducted away to the first hydrotreating stage.

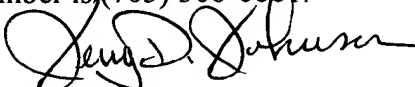
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerry D. Johnson whose telephone number is (703) 308-2515.

The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00-3:30, M-F, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marian Knode can be reached on (703) 308-4311. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-5408 for regular communications and (703) 305-3599 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.


Jerry D. Johnson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1764

JDJ
July 16, 2001